

Park Whets Hill Probe's Appetite for Kim

By Charles R. Babcock
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Accused South Korean agent Tongsun Park has told congressional investigators that his lobbying activities on Capitol Hill were viewed by former Korean ambassador Kim Dong Jo as "invading" an area where the ambassador had a "monopoly."

Park testified he did not have personal knowledge of cash payments ambassador Kim allegedly made to members of Congress, according to sources who attended Park's closed-door House interrogation last week.

But his testimony has strengthened the investigators' desire to question Kim about his activities in Washington in the early 1970s, committee sources said yesterday. "We knew what Park was doing, paying off members of Congress," one source said. "And now, more than ever, we'd like to ask Ambassador Kim about the monopoly he felt Park was invading."

The renewed interest in Kim by the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct is likely to revive efforts in the House to cut off U.S. aid to South Korea. The issue has been an especially sensitive one for the Carter administration. The State Department has sided with South Korea in saying that demands for Kim's testimony would breach international covenants on diplomatic immunity.



KIM DONG JO
... former South Korean ambassador

Leon Jaworski, special counsel to the House committee, has said repeatedly that he considered Kim a more important witness than Tongsun Park.

In public hearings last fall, the committee heard allegations that Kim was seen stuffing envelopes with \$100 bills before a trip to Capitol Hill. Kim was also identified by one House member's secretary as the man who delivered a cash-filled envelope to the member's office.

The committee's demands for Kim's testimony were shelved temporarily while the members and staff concentrated on arranging for Park's return from South Korea to testify. Jaworski met last Wednesday with Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance to emphasize the need for Kim's testimony.

Committee members who sat in on Park's questioning last week told reporters that the former Washington businessman was evasive in answers about his ties with the South Korean government.

He did testify, according to one source, that he had an interest in doing what he could to protect "the security of South Korea." This was the area the ambassador felt Park was invading, the source said.

Park has been charged with conspiring to bribe members of Congress as part of a South Korean government campaign to ensure continued U.S. military and economic aid. The Justice Department has agreed to drop the charges in return for his truthful testimony.

He is expected to be a prosecution witness in the March 20 bribery trial of former Rep. Richard T. Hanna (D-Calif.), who is accused of accepting more \$100,000 from Park over the years.

There were signs of Park's rivalry with ambassador Kim almost a year ago when The Washington Post reported that Hanna had written South Korean President Park Chung Hee, on Tongsun Park's behalf, to try to clear up a continuing dispute between the two men in 1973.

At one point during his testimony last week, Park described Kim as a "political enemy," one congressional source said. Park then quickly changed his description of Kim to that of a "business enemy" to avoid the appearance their feud was an intragovernmental dispute.

The House could show its displeasure about the Kim situation in several ways. A resolution has been introduced by Rep. Allen E. Ertel (D-Pa.) to link continued U.S. aid to Korea to cooperation with the House investigation. And the March 15 budget resolution has been mentioned as a vehicle for a symbolic amendment cutting off aid to South Korea if witnesses such as Kim are not made available to the House investigators.